
Mr. *PULLEN*'s
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the
Gentlemen Educated at St. *Paul*'s SCHOOL,
A T
St. *PAUL*'s Church, Jan. 25. 169^s.

By *JOHN PULLEN*, A. M.

And Published by *A. PARKER*.

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St. Paul's Church, Jan. 22, 1892

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Gentlemen Educared at St. Paul's School

Preach'd before the

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Mr. PULLEYMAN'S

A
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Preach'd at the
Anniversary Meeting

OF THE
Gentlemen Educated at
St. Paul's School,

AT
St. PAUL's Church,
January 25. 169⁸.

Published at the Request of the Stewards.

By JOHN PULLEYN, A. M.
And Prebendary of St. PAULS.

*London, Printed for Walter Kettilby, at the Bishop's Head
in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1699.*

A
SERMON

Preach'd at the

Anniversary Meeting

OF THE

Gentlemen Educated at

St. Paul's School.

AT

St. Paul's Church

January 25. 1699.

Published at the Request of the Students.

By JOHN PULEY, A.M.
And Prebendary of St. Paul's.

London, Printed for Walter Kettilby, at the Bishop's Head
in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1699.

TO THE
Worthy Gentlemen
THE
STEWARDS
OF
St. Paul's School Feast :

Robert Fowle, Gent. } Samuel Lloyd, Gent.
John Killingworth, Esq; } John Baggs, Esq;
George Smith, Gent. } William Bonner, Gent.

GENTLEMEN,

TH^O this Sermon was preached
at your earnest Request, yet
I could have wished you would
have excused me from the Publication
of it. But since you would not be
denied, I should be very well pleased
if

The Epistle Dedicatory.

if you share not in the Faults and Imperfections of this Discourse, which you have now made your own, by espousing the Subject, and obliging the Preacher to the Printing of it. I have only this to say for my self, that your Generous Inclinations to do Good, and your present Resolutions to encourage all the Worthy Gentlemen, who were educated at St. PAUL's School, to lay a new Foundation of Charity for that Place, led me to the Subject of this ensuing Discourse. And I hope this will be one Consequent of it, that this beginning of your Charity will annually be improved by all those who bear any Relation or Love to the Place of their Education. And I do not question, but succeeding Years may raise a noble Superstructure of Charity from this Ground-work you have so happily laid,

The Epistle Dedicatory.

*laid, for the Honour of our School, and
for the Encouragement of all Arts and
Learning.*

*May all your excellent Designs prosper,
your Christian Charity in General flourish,
may you bring Honour to our
Establiſh'd Church and Kingdom, where-
of you are Worthby Members, and may
you never want a Blessing and Success
in all your particular Stations and Em-
ployments; which is the hearty Wish
of,*

GENTLEMEN,

Your most Sincere and

Humble Servant,

John Pulleyn.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

laid, for the Honour of our School, and
for the Encouragement of all, that are
Learning. My all your excellent Design prop-
per, your Christian Charity in General
honour, may you bring Honour to our
Assembled Church and Kingdom, where-
of you are worthy Members, and may
your return merit a Blessing and Success
in all your particular Stations and Em-
ployments; which is the hearty Wish

GENTLEMEN,

Your most sincere and

Humble Servant,

John Pellam.

ACTS xx. ver. 35. latter part.

—It is more blessed to Give than to Receive.

JOY and Pleasure being the Bright side of human Life, it never touches the Heart and the Affections with a greater satisfaction, than when it arises from the Consideration of those many Blessings and Advantages, which result from Societies and Combinations of Men: And therefore it is not only a delightful Prospect to me, but, I presume likewise, to every one here present, to behold the Lustre of this *Solemn Day*; the Design of which is so excellent and commendable, and all the Circumstances of it so harmonious and beautiful. What can be more grateful and ravishing, than to see the *Children* of one fruitful *School*, the Offspring of a Pious, Learned, and Religious *Founder*, to see them so well united to pay their sincere Gratitude and Honour to the Place of their *Education* in the face of the World? And especially to see them begin this their Gratitude with a dutiful acknowledgment to the great God of Heaven and Earth, in whom all that is now expected and desired of us *This Day* ought to terminate? *I was glad* (said the Royal Prophet) *when* ^{Psa. 122.} *they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord;* ^{1.} *glad to see, that thither the Tribes go up to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord.*

And now (*Worthy School-Fellows*, by whatever *Titles* you may be *dignified* above, or *distinguished* from one another) since you have met together on

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this

this Day, (and in this most *Holy Place*) which the Church hath set apart to commemorate the great Apostle *St. Paul*, to render Thanks for that Blessing of our *Education* in that *School*, which so worthily bears that *Name*, and which ought likewise ever to put us in mind of those Benefits and Advantages we have received from thence, I hope this Religious beginning of our appearance this Day, will give a happy and a successful Influence upon the following part of your *Solemnity*, especially seeing you are resolv'd to retrieve in some measure the primitive *Feast of Charity*, which is in truth the chief and most laudable Design of these and other the like *Anniversary Meetings*. A Design so noble and generous in it self, so beneficial to others, so becoming Men, and so truly Christian, that as it formerly obtained amongst us, and met with good Encouragement, so I hope upon the revival of this *Feast*, it will now be carried on, and cherish'd and supported both by the Approbation and Contributions of all pious and well-meaning Persons.

And therefore in regard all the Benefits and Advantages of a Free and an Ingenuous *Education*, was the last Year excellently and fully in this *Place*, and upon the same *Occasion*, declar'd unto you, I shall wave that Argument of Discourse, and at present only entertain you with what is as suitable and proper to all the Purposes of our *present Meeting*, as will appear from the Consideration of these Words of our blessed Saviour, here cited by *St. Paul*, — *It is more blessed to give, than to receive.*

These Words of the Holy Jesus are not recorded by any of the *Evangelists*; the Gospel of *St. John*,
and

and probably that of St. Mark, being not written when St. Paul cited them. He must therefore either receive them as an *Oral Tradition* from the Apostles, or some first-hand Witnesses, or else from him, who gave him the first Instruction of his Office, and communicated the Gospel to him; which he declared, he did not receive it from Men, but was taught it by the Revelation of Jesus Christ. But notwithstanding the first conveyers of this remarkable Sentence are uncertain, yet the Author of them is unquestionable; the Apostle plainly affirming that they were spoken by our blessed Saviour: — *Remember the Words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed, &c.*

Gal. i.
12.

Which Words are to be expounded according to the measure and limitation of other Proverbial Sentences in Scripture, not as if they would hold in that full latitude, which Grammar and the sound of Words will allow. The Meaning only is, that the Nature of Things is usually such, that generally speaking, *It is more blessed to give than to receive*; Generally speaking, I say, upon a due ballance of Circumstances, and a supposal of right Qualifications. For otherwise, if He that dispenses his Charity, doth it out of a Principle of Interest or Vain-glory, to gain a Reputation, or strengthen a Faction; If he do it to encroach upon the just Liberties of the Person obliged, to upbraid him with his Necessities, to betray him into sinful Compliances, and to make him absolutely obnoxious to his Humour und Inclination, (a grateful Acknowledger and benevolent Receiver is much to be preferred before such a Donor as this) such scandalous Reserves as these, are enough to take off the Value, and null the Obligation of the largest proportion

proportion of Alms and Liberality. If a Man should give away a Kingdom upon such narrow and vicious Considerations, none were obliged to thank him for it: Because his Good-will did not accompany his Gift: because he did not design his Neighbours Benefit, but his own: His only Motive was Vanity, Self-design, or Ill-nature. So that what he parts withal, is properly but Merchandise and Strategem; and consequently tho' he gives all his Goods to the Poor, in the account of God and Reason, he is *nothing*; he will never be the better for it, tho' others may. But then if we consider the General Event of Things, if we suppose the *Giver* and the *Receiver* (purely considered as such) to be free both from ill Principles and Moral Indispositions, we shall find the advantage on the *Givers* side: which will appear, if we consider the Meaning of the Text more distinctly.

It is more blessed, &c.

Which Words may import these two Things, *viz.*

I. That the Condition of the *Giver* is more desirable than that of the *Receiver*, because it is more satisfactory and secure, and so argues greater Perfection.

II. That *Giving* is more commendable than *Receiving*, because generally speaking, it is a clearer evidence of a noble and virtuous disposition of Mind.

1. I say the Condition of the *Giver* is more desirable than that of the *Receiver*, because it includes greater Perfection; and that

First, As it is a sign of Sufficiency and Power.

Men

Men generally understand, that the Law of Self-preservation, allows them to furnish themselves with something more, than the bare Necessities of Life, before they are obliged to assist their Neighbours; that tho' they be bound to *love* others as well as themselves, yet not better: Nay they think, that if their Abilities are not large enough to divide between their Neighbours Necessities and their own, in most Cases they may lawfully prefer themselves: And without question, if Men stated the Case fairly, and account nothing Necessary, but what is really so, they might be allowed to practise by this Opinion. Now, according to this general Apprehension, He that gives to another, seems to be well provided for himself; he is supposed able to defray the necessary Charge of Life, and answer the just Importunities of Nature; and not only so, but to have a redundancy and superfluity of Power to bestow, where he judges convenient. He that *Gives* not only looks like a *Full Being*, whose Abilities are not wholly exhausted upon it self, but like a swelling River, which after it hath filled the Channel of its own desires, overflows its Banks to relieve the barrenness of the neighbouring Ground. Whereas *Receiving* implies Want and Weakness, empty Spaces, and unsatisfied Desires, which a Man can't furnish and content himself with, but must depend upon the arbitrary assistance of others. The *Giver* resembles a Fruitful Country, which hath all the conveniences of Life within it self, and subsists upon the Product of its own Growth: whereas he that *Receives*, must undergo the labour and hazard of a long Voyage, and the uneasiness of a Foreign Commerce and Conversation.

Besides,

Besides, *Giving* includes *Choice*; for what a Man parts with to another, he hath freedom to retain himself, and consequently he hath the power to assign the proportion of his own Liberalities, and may reserve as much as he pleases for his own occasions. And if he takes his *Measures* too narrow, he is accountable to none but God Almighty. But the *Receiver* is not to be his own *Carver*; he can neither warrant the Certainty, or the Proportion of a Supply, but must depend in the Circumstances of his support upon the kindness of his Neighbour. We see therefore that *Power* and an approach to Self-sufficiency is a very desirable Companion to any Being. *Power* is the greatest active Attribute of God Almighty, and which provides satisfaction for the rest of his Glorious Perfections. This is that which makes him the Terror of the Wicked, and the assured Hope and Refuge of the Righteous. It is his Almighty Arm which brings his just Decrees into effect, and makes all his Counsels stand. By this he is prepared to govern and judge the World in Righteousness; to repay Vengeance to his Adversaries, and to save those to the uttermost that come to him. Whereas *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, unassisted by *Power*, are but vain Speculations and insignificant Wishes. What doth a Fine and Judicious Contrivance signify, if we are not able to bring it about? What are we the better for foreseeing an Evil, if we cannot prevent it? To see Reason lie fetter'd in Impotency, and miscarrying in all its worthy Designs; to reflect, that Foresight and Consideration, and Thought cannot divert those Misfortunes it so clearly discovers, must needs be very afflicting to any rational Being, and
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turn its Perfection into Misery. So *Goodness*, when not seconded by Ability, doth but make the Owner uneasy, because he sees it impossible for him to effect that which he hath so great a mind to. To have strong Affections and Compassions for another, without being able to give them those Advantages we judge proper for them, or to deliver them from those Pressures, which we imagine they lie under, doth but make a Man unhappy in his good Nature, and to languish away his generous Being in kind Wishes, and in ineffectual Desires.

From all which it follows, that in regard the *Giver* is supposed to have odds of *Power* in his hands, upon this account his Condition is more desirable than that of the *Receiver*.

2. The Condition of the *Giver* is more desirable, because the just Liberty and ingenuous Temper of the Mind is best secured in such Circumstances.

I confess that Rational Beings, much more Christians, ought to be so immovably Great, as not to be sway'd by the Accidents of Life; so humble and resigned to Providence, as not to raise or sink their Spirits, according to the various successes of Things below. Yet notwithstanding this, we may observe, that this World hath an unhappy Command over the greatest part of Mankind, Mens Minds usually resembling the Nature and Complexion of their outward Affairs. When Men believe their Circumstances are well supported, this is apt to inspire them with generous Thoughts, and raises them to a certain *Grandeur* of Spirit. It gives them a confiding *Aire*, and a well-assured *Deportment*; and if they have but discretion to keep themselves from running into the
Extreams

Extreams of Pride and Insolence, their Actions are remarkably graceful, by having a noble mixture of Freedom, and unconcernedness in them. Those who think their Accommodations not much short of their Desires, and have a competent assurance of continuance in it, are usually free in their Sentiments and steady in their Resolutions. They need not be governed by a foreign Fancy and Direction. And therefore when they are so happy, as to be under the conduct of good Principles, they are in a fair way to keep them: Whereas on the contrary, an Indigent Condition sinks the Mind below its native dignity, and makes it anxious and diffident of it self. It produces servile Thoughts, ignoble Councils, and unsteady Resolutions. They are not always allowed to speak and act according to the Dictates of their own Reason, but have their Humour and Practice prescribed by others. For being unable to support themselves, and sometimes the *favour* of those, who are able to assist, is not to be gained without submitting to unwarrantable Compliances; They must, if they will succeed, dissemble and flatter, and take no notice of the Imperfections, applaud sometime, and imitate the Vices of their Benefactors, otherwise there is no countenance to be expected from them. In short, they must be sometimes contented to be slaves to the Pride and Folly of others, and to run thro' all the dishonourable ways of Scandal and Meanness.

Not but there hath been many Persons of brave and excellent Spirits, whose *Integrity* is as remarkable as their *Poverty*; who have bore up against the most disadvantageous Circumstances, and scorn'd to
be

be over-awed into base and sinful Obsequiousness: who would not prostitute their Consciences; and live upon the Spoils of their *Hungry*. And as a Necessary Condition doth not excuse any to transgress their Duty to God; so neither doth it excuse them, when they do: As it was their Choice, so it will be their Destruction, if they continue in it. However, thus much we may conclude, that Indigence and Poverty is more likely to produce abjectness of Mind, and is a greater temptation to sinful Compliance; and consequently the Condition of the *Receiver*, is not so secure and desirable as that of the *Giver*.

3. The Condition of the *Giver* implies an honourable Trust committed to him by God Almighty. God, who is the supreme *Proprietor*, hath permitted an unequal distribution of the Good Things of this Life, both for the better security of Government, and likewise to prove the Resignation of the Poor, and the Justice and Humanity of the Wealthy. Now those who have the greater share of the division fallen to them, have the honour to be God's *Stewards* and *Almoners* to dispence the blessings of his Providence to the *Needy*, and, as it were, in a literal sense, to give his *Household* their meat in due season. The *Poor* are, as it were, *Minors* all their Life-time; they do not come to their Estate till the other World; and God therefore hath assigned the *Rich* for their *Guardians*, who are to supply their Necessities, and protect them from Injury and Oppression. An honourable Employment this is, by which the comfortable Subsistence of our poor Brethren is entrusted with us, and their Lives are in a manner committed to us. It looks like a *Testimonial* of our Worth from

God Almighty, as if he had ownd our *Sufficiency* for the discharge of this Office, and did not suspect our Integrity in the management of it. We should remember therefore, as the Trust is honourable and weighty, we are bound to perform it with a proportionable Care and Fidelity; and that St. Paul hath told us, *that it is required in a Steward to be faithful.* We should consider, that God never gives any Person any full and unconditional propriety in his Estate, but always reserves a *Rent-Charge* out of it for the Use of the Poor, only the *Summ* is left to the discretion of the Owner; which, as it ought to be fairly and liberally stated, so we should take care to pay it where it was due: neither throwing away our Lord's Money for the support of Sloth and Lewdness, nor overlooking any deserving Object. For as we ought not to be careless, so neither should we be too scrupulous. For those who won't afford their Charity without a demonstration of real and compassionate Want, seem to love their Money much better than their Neighbour; and give a shrewd suspicion that they are willing to find a colourable Evasion to lay aside their *Trust*, tho' their indigent Brother suffers never so much by it. But when (where we see apparent signs of Necessity lie before us) we have been as cautious, as the Circumstances of the Occasion will permit, we should content our selves with a fair probability, and not stand upon a nice and curious enquiry into the Desert of the Person. To this, both Duty to God, and good Nature to Man inclines us, considering that we cannot lose by such a Mistake. For if the Person happens to be Unworthy, he doth not cheat us, but himself. If we are but prudentially careful, our

Charity

Charity which was done out of Principles of obedience to God and compassion to our Neighbour, will never fare the worse for the wickedness and hypocrisy of the *Receiver*.

2. Another Meaning of the Words of the *Text*, and which we have reason to believe our *blessed Saviour* chiefly intends, is, that *Giving* is more commendable than *Receiving*, because *generally speaking*, it is a clearer evidence of a Noble and Vertuous disposition of Mind: And that on these four Accounts.

1. Because it is a greater sign of Goodness. I know it may be objected, that the *Receiver* may plead a Title to this Quality, as well as the other. For it is a fault not to *receive*, as well as not to *give*. To refuse an Obligation (except where we have reason to suspect that the Design and the Event may be ill, that it comes from a bad Intention, and brings ill Consequences along with it) is a sign of a haughty and unfociable Temper. To reject the Gift, either supposes it unsuitable to our Condition, or unsafe to accept, and consequently reproaches him that offers it with indiscretion or insincerity. By refusing his Kindness, we undervalue his Person and renounce his Friendship, plainly declaring, that we are not willing to enter into an amicable correspondence and familiarity with him. It is an argument of Pride, of a shy and unconvertible Suspiciousness: and therefore by the Rule of Contraries, to be willing to *receive*, seems to argue an humble and humane disposition of Mind, that hath worthy and charitable Thoughts of Man, that thinks no Evil, but is ready upon all occasions to enter into a strict union and intercourse with others.

But here we must consider that this Objection is not valid; but where the Condition of the *Receiver* is well supported; where he is able to provide for himself without the *Benevolence* of others. For if his Circumstances are indigent, tho' his Temper be very humane, tho' his Inclination may be (and often is) very friendly and generous, yet the disadvantage of his Condition hinders these commendable Qualities from shewing of themselves. His Necessity is judged sufficient to make him willing to come under an Obligation without the conjunction of any other more creditable *Motives*; which makes his *Receiving* look like a much greater argument of kindness to himself than others. But to *give* when there are no apparent marks of an ill Intention, is a fair indication of a rich and of a benevolent disposition. It is a generous exercise of *Power*. It shews that we wish Mankind happy, by our endeavouring to make them so. What can be a more convincing Proof of the tender and compassionate sense we have of the Wants and Afflictions of others, than to be willing to part with some Conveniencies of our own to receive them.

1. *Giving* is a better evidence of a virtuous disposition of Mind, because it is a sign of a greater disengagement from the World. *Receiving* may consist well enough with covetous Desires, with a narrow and anxious Mind, with a distrust of Providence, and an over-valuing Opinion of the Things of this Life. He that *receives*, I say, may have all these ignoble Qualities. I do not mean that he hath them, but that there is nothing to the contrary implied in the Act of *Receiving*: But now on the other side,

to part with our Wealth freely towards the promoting of worthy and charitable Designs, is a good argument of a great and a religious Mind, that hath honourable thoughts of Providence, and relies upon it, and is secure and unconcern'd about the Events of this Life; such a Person seems to understand the true Use of this World, and to have no more than a just value for it. He will not be governed and enslaved by his Fortune, but is resolved to make use of it for those Purposes God gave it him, and rather chooses to live Charitably than die Rich. He that *forgets not to do good and to communicate*, gives us good assurance, that his Conversation is in Heaven; that he hath made a higher choice, and is in pursuit of nobler Objects, than are to be met with here. For if he aimed at nothing but this World, we have reason to believe he would never so freely part with it. But when the Abilities of the *Giver* are small, when he hath nothing but his Labour and Industry to depend upon for the future; when as *St. Paul* testifies of the *Macedonians*, Men are willing to give not only according ^{2 Cor.} to, but beyond their Power, and like the Widow in the ^{8. 3.} Gospel, casts, as it were, their whole Living into the Poors Treasury; This is an undeniable evidence both of the generousness and devotion of their Spirits, that they have worthy apprehensions of God, and are benevolently inclined toward their Neighbours.

3. Supposing the *Giver* and the *Receiver* both rightly disposed, yet the due Qualifications of the first will contribute more to the happiness of the other World, than those of the latter: *i. e.* Charity will promote our future Happiness more than bare Gratitude.

Our

Mat. 25. Our blessed Saviour, where he tells us that those of his right hand shall be called to *inherit the Kingdom prepared for them*, gives us the reason of this Invitation, *viz.* That because they had been Charitable and Beneficent, fed the Hungry, cloath'd the Naked, and administred comfort and relief to those who were in Distress. He doth not say, you have been grateful toward your Benefactors, remembered their good Deeds, and pray'd for them, therefore come *into the Kingdom prepared for you*. Tho' these are undoubtedly Virtues, yet the rewarding Sentence is not founded upon these: Neither shall we wonder to find *Charity* preferred before *Gratitude*, if we consider, that according to the general Temper of Mankind, the exercise of it, hath more of difficulty in it, and the Effects of it are more beneficial. A Man may be *grateful* without being at the expence of any thing, but a little Pride. He loses nothing but a stubborn Humour, which is usually so far mortified by strait Circumstances, that People can part with it, without much trouble. The acknowledging of a Kindness is so far from diminishing any Man's Fortune, that it rather gives him a prospect of encreasing it. But he that *gives* in any considerable measure parts with a real Advantage, and is at present at least so much the Poorer by it. Now in regard the good Things of this Life are in our actual possession, and likewise agreeable to our inclination, Men find some difficulty to part with them, unless they have a strong sense of Duty upon them, and their hearts are enlarged by Religious Considerations.

Besides, to be *Charitable*, is much more necessary to the support of Mankind, than to be *Grateful*. For
Gratitude

Gratitude is usually due to the wealthy and powerful, who are able to provide for themselves, tho' their Favours should happen to be unacknowledged: but Charity respects the poor and needy, who absolutely depend upon its assistance. *Ingratitude* often only disappoints and disquiets, but *Uncharitableness* brings real Mischiefs along with it. A man looses nothing but his Expectation by the one, but his Life may be in danger by the other.

Lastly, *Gratitude* seems to be commanded upon the accounts of *Charity*, and therefore must be inferior to it. To be Grateful is a Virtue, chiefly because such a disposition encourages those, who have power, to assist their Neighbours. For Men are not generally arrived to such a disinterested pitch of Virtue, as to give purely out of Principles of Humanity: Nay, tho' they believe they shall be mightily rewarded for what they do, yet they are not willing to stay for the whole return of their *Charity* till the other World. If they have not some present payment in *Respect* and *Acknowledgment*, they are apt to be discouraged, and grow weary of well-doing. But a just Sense of their Favours supports their charitable Disposition, and invites it to proceed. A grateful return, convinces them, that they were not mistaken in their Object, and consequently confirms them in the Discretion of their choice, and is moreover an acknowledgement of their Goodness and Power. Now such Apprehensions as these Men are willing others should have of them. Since therefore Gratitude is chiefly enjoind to promote Charity, it must be own'd to be of an inferior Order, and consequently, as the Virtue of the *Giver* hath a fairer Trial than that of the *Receiver*, so likewise it is of a higher Order.

4. Ano-

4. Another Reason, Why *it is more blessed, &c.* is, because there is more pleasure in it, and that upon Three Accounts.

1. Because it makes us instrumental in promoting the Good of others. The Charitable Person (where his Fortune bears any tolerable proportion with the largeness of his Mind) is the great and universal Remedy against the Calamities and Misfortunes of Life. He is as it were, a Father to the Fatherless, Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame. He is Liberty to the Captive, and if not Health, yet Ease and Refreshment to the Sick: Now to be able in some measure to remove Want and Pain, and Diseases out of the World, to make the minds of the Needy more chearful, and their Bodies more acceptable and serviceable to them; to do this, I say, must be no ordinary satisfaction to a well-disposed Mind. What a strange alteration do we see in a *poor man*, when he receives a liberal Alms at the hand, or a Refreshment at the Table of another? All Sense of his former Wants seem to be forgotten, and his Soul, his Looks, and Motion, seem to be animated with Joy, and have the very meen and image of Contentment in them. He seems to be made over again, and to have fresh Ingredients of Happiness thrown into his Composition. It's not unusual to see such a Person more transported with the receiving a *few pence*, than another is with the news of an *Estate*. And must it not be very entertaining, to abate, if not to extinguish the Misery of one of our own Nature, and to communicate Pleasure at so cheap a rate? One would think, a Man could not lay out his Money so much to his satisfaction any other way. It must needs be a
mighty

mighty Pleasure to a good Man to be in a Capacity of making others happy. For by this he hath an opportunity of gratifying his generous inclinations, and of effecting that which he so much desires. By putting others into a good condition he secures and improves his own. For by making easie and lessening the Inconveniences of Mankind, he so far prevents the interruption of his own Happiness, which would otherwise arise from Pity and Compassion. The kind affection he hath for his Neighbour, makes him *rejoice with them that rejoice*, and counts anothers happiness his own. To do Good is very delightful, because by this we are assured, that our Mind is benign and humane, that it is in its right constitution; that Covetousness, Malice, and Envy, do not bear rule within us, but that we are free from the shame and disturbance of such un-
 easie and scandalous Passions. By this we are conscious that we are of the same temper with God himself; which as it is the greatest honour we are capable of, so if we are like him, we are sure we must be acceptable to him, and that he will publickly own his approbation of us afterwards to our unspeakable reward.

To which we may add, that the Matter of a Benefaction often continues but a little while. An Alms may be soon spent and gone, and the *Receiver* in distress for want of another; but the advantage of him that gave it is not of so frail and short-liv'd a nature. The pleasure of a Charitable action keeps us company all along in this World, and in the next too. It is turned as it were into the substance of the Soul, and is as immortal as the Will from whence it came. It hath a happy influence upon all sorts of

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Accidents

Accidents and Conditions. It doubles our Prosperity, and supports our Adversity; it makes us enjoy our Life, and be less surpris'd at the approaches of Death. Indeed the Pleasure with which the Charitable Man is entertained with here, and the Rewards which are promised to him afterward, is so great, that we perfectly *misunderstand* and *miscall* things. For properly speaking, the *Receivers* are the *Benefactors*. The greatest Obligation comes from the Needy, because they are the occasion of a far greater advantage to their Neighbour, than what they receive from him; so that when the Gain is computed on both sides, the *Receiver* looks most like the Charitable Person. From whence it will follow, that the Poor ought rather to be courted and importuned, than denied, and we should be more forward to offer them our assistance than they are to ask it.

To this it may be replied, that these Advantages do not come from the *Receiver*, nor depend upon him; tho, if he is a good Man, his Prayers are no mean Requital. The great advantages of *Charity* proceed chiefly from God's goodness, who is pleas'd to entail so great a reward upon it; and partly from the generous Mind of the *Giver*, who delights in doing good, and in assisting of others: and therefore next to God, he is the *Author* of his own Pleasure, which doth not depend upon the *Will*, or *Qualifications* of him he relieves, but springs from that noble disposition of his own Mind. However the Objection hath truth enough in it to excite us to Charity, and to make us cherish the Poor for our own sake, as well as theirs, who, as the Apostle speaks, are the happy occasions of *making many rich*.

2. There

12. There is more pleasure in *Giving*, &c. because from hence we have the satisfaction to believe that others have worthy apprehensions of us.

As Men generally think well of themselves, so they are desirous others should do so too. For besides the advantages they may expect from such a sense of the concurring judgment of their Neighbours; it confirms them in the good Opinion they have of themselves, which is by no means unacceptable to them. Reputation is a thing so much coveted, that Men are willing to expose themselves to the greatest hazards to purchase it: Nay so *fantastically* fond are some Persons of the acknowledgment of their good qualities, that they are willing to have a *Stock* of *Fame* going after they are dead: never considering that it signifies nothing, tho' the whole World rings in a Man's applause, if in the mean time he hears and knows nothing of it. But notwithstanding our affecting good Opinion of others is not unlawful, when it is void of Pride, Ambition and Vanity; when it is only desired to encourage us in Vertue, and to give us the fairer opportunities of doing good to our Neighbour.

Now by *Receiving* a Man can't so certainly collect, that he stands in the good opinion of others. For Men are often so censorious, as to conclude, that his Necessity was occasioned by his Neglect, or Immorality; and that it was not his Merit, but his Want, which moved the religious compassion of the *Giver* to assist him. But he that is *liberal* and *charitable* in any Remarkable Degree, hath usually a better construction put upon his Actions. The *Envious* are almost afraid to detract from his Merits, and he

may fairly presume, that he is approved by the *Generality*, and entertain himself with the satisfaction of it.

3. Another advantage of *Giving* is this, that it will enlarge the *Generality* of our Minds, and make us more disposed to prosecute the Good of others.

The exercise of this Virtue will not only, like other habits, grow easie by Custom, but readily disengage us from narrow and tenacious Principles. And there is a particular reason, why we should improve under the practice of it. For it is natural for Men to love those they have obliged. They look upon such Persons as *Creatures* of their own making; and therefore they love to pursue and second one Kindness with another. Should they cease to oblige, this would (they know) reflect upon the Discretion of their first choice. They might fear, that what they have bestowed already would be in a great measure lost, and that others would suspect, that the largeness of their Mind began to decay, and to contract it self into its own private Interest. Love is observed to descend more vigorously from the Parent to the Child, than to move the other way. The reason is probably, because they look upon them as being derived from themselves, and grow up into strength and maturity under their care and protection: which makes them cherish and rejoice in the Effects of their own Power, and Kindness, and imagine themselves to flourish in their Offspring. Now the *Receiver*, if he is not of a very happy and Christian Temper, if the Obligation was not confirm'd upon him with frankness and affability, he will not find himself in any vigorous disposition toward *Gratitude*. For there

is nothing more certain, than that the acknowledgment of Mens inability and dependance, which results from the Relation of a *Benefactor*, make some Persons abate in their affections toward him. But the *obliging Person* hath a delightful sense and prospect of his Condition. He views himself under the notion of *Power* and *Goodness*; which is a strong Motive to invire his Charity and Beneficence, because he finds himself magnified by it, and the farther advances he makes in the exercise of this Vertue, the more he raises the Elevation of his Being.

Thus, I hope, I have, in some measure, made good the Truth of these excellent Words of our Saviour, — *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

I shall briefly infer something from the Text, and so conclude.

1. Since it is more happy to *Give*, than to *Receive*, I think we ought carefully to avoid all *vanity* and *superfluity* in the managery of our Fortunes, that so we may be the better able to contribute more liberally to those that want. Indeed were there no such thing as Want and Necessity in the World, was every one competently furnished with the Conveniences of Life, Men might then have been permitted a freer, and a more indulgent use of their Wealth: Then, provided that they had not fallen into any vicious Excesses, they might have been allowed to entertain their Appetites at a more expensive rate, and to have pleased their little *Fancies* with the *glitterings* of State and Magnificence. For tho' a strong propensity to the pleasures of Sense, and an affected ostentation of Riches would be an argument of a weak and an obnoxious Mind, yet others would

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not have been the worse for such an Extravagance. But now since we have the *Poor* always with us, since there are so many in indigent and unsupported Circumstances, if we prefer the *vanity* and *effeminacy* of an unaccountable *Desire*, before the *Necessities* of our *Brethren*, we are both *Unjust* and *Inhuman*. For what can be more unaccountable, than to throw away the surplusage of our Fortune upon empty and insignificant *Shows*, when there are so many Misfortunes and Miseries of Mankind, which might have been in a great measure removed and alleviated by us. And as there is nothing more unreasonable and unrighteous to spend the *Patrimony* of the *Poor* upon *Luxury* and *Pride*; so it likewise deprives us of the great *Pleasure*, which is consequent to a Charitable disposition. Such a Person can't conclude that he hath the Favour and Esteem either of God or Man: the belief of which is one of the greatest supports and entertainments to a rational Mind. On the contrary, if he hath but sense and impartiality enough to examine his own Actions and Temper, when he sees how selfish and narrow-spirited he is, how void of the proper Tenderness and Generosity of his kind, in this Case, if he have any apprehension of Good and Evil left him, he cannot choose, but be a very unagreeable Spectacle to himself, and condemn himself in those Things which he allows.

2. Those which are *Receivers* ought not to murmur against the Providence of God, and be discontented with their *Condition*. That the *Givers* Circumstances are more desirable, must be granted for the forementioned Reasons. But to draw the *Bal-*
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lance somewhat towards an evenness, we may add, that as the *Receiver's Condition* is not so liable to some *Vices*, as the other is, so neither hath he so large an *Account* to give up afterwards. For as our *blessed Saviour* tells us, that *to whom much is given, much will be required*; so he whose *Trust* is small, will have the less proportion of Stock and Improvement to be answerable for. Besides, by his Acknowledgment and good Wilhes, and Prayers, he hath a fair opportunity of discharging the *Debt*, and returning the *Obligation* upon the most *Considerable Benefactor*. As for *Dependance*, which all Mankind have a natural aversion to, is rather out of a Spirit of native Greatness than Pride. I say, this unacceptable attendance of a *Low Condition*, is not so peculiar to it, as to be the *Poor-man's* Fate alone. This is an Inconvenience that pursues the *Indigent* and *defenceless* State of humane Nature in general: there being no rank nor degrees of Men, raised to that height of *Self-sufficiency*, but are in some measure sensible of the weight and uneasiness of it.

As long as Men carry these frail Bodies about them, they must lie at the mercy of a *foreign Assistance*, and be subject sometimes to the *Insolence* and *Idleness* of an uncompassionate and haughty Disposition. But when we have nothing but a *poor Spirit* to take care of, which is able to maintain it self upon the strength of its own Being, it is impregnable against all Assault. And when this *Mortal* shall have put on Immortality, and shall be no longer liable to *Wound*, or exposed to Injury, then all the Causes of *Dependance* will vanish and fall off; and Men in the most comprehensive sense, will be translated into the most glorious

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15.

glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. For notwithstanding the Saints will have different degrees of Glory, proportionable to the great Works of Piety and Goodness they have done here, yet this Distinction will not subject those of the Lowest Order, to any dependence upon a Superior Quality. For the Apostle St. Paul tells us then, that all Rule and Authority shall be put down, and God shall be all in all. Which noble State of Freedom must, without all question, much endear the Society of that Place, and consequently augment the happiness of those, who have the honour to make a part of it.

3. And Lastly, Since the Case stands thus with us, I shall in a very few words more, exhort every one here present to this Duty of Charity: I mean, more particularly, those of us, who have enjoyed the advantages of a Liberal Education at St. Paul's School. And if ever I could hope to prevail and persuade in this Matter, I should certainly expect no more Success in such an Assembly as this, which consists of Persons well Taught and Bred, whose Natures have been refined and polished, and whose Minds have been improved and cultivated, new moulded and fashioned by the Care and Skill of those Excellent Persons, to whose Charge we were committed. The several Meetings and Solemn Feasts, which the Jews (who were a Particular Society and Body of Men distinct from the rest of the World) held unto the Lord, were appointed and instituted by God himself; such were the Passover, the Feast of Harvest, and Ingathering: And there was very great care taken in the strict Observation of them, that none were then to appear Empty before the Lord. And

And tho' this *Festival Assembly*, this *Anniversary Feast* which we hold now unto the Lord, hath not the same Divine Authority to warrant its Institution, yet I am sure it hath the same pious and laudable Ends accompanying it. For we are here met in this *Sacred Place* to offer up our Praises and Thanksgivings for all those excellent Advantages, which we by his goodness have obtained from a Free and an Ingenuous Education at our School. "To praise him with our Mouths, whose Lips he hath opened with the Key of Knowledge, to rejoice before him, that our Lot fell to us in so good a Ground. That he vouchsafed to plant us by the Water-Springs, by the Rivulets of Knowledge, that we might bring forth the several Fruits of our proper Callings in our due time and season. Neither in this our Meeting must we appear before the Lord Empty; seeing that our Charity and our Piety ought to go hand in hand, and kiss each other.

Let us then shew our Tenderness of Thought and Affection to the Place, where we received our Institution, and had our younger Years seasoned with Honest and Religious Principles, and laid a solid Foundation for our after-life to live upon. Let this Love be expressed by a liberal Contribution to it; I mean, for the Educating of good Mens poor Children, in useful Literature and Knowledge: This being one of the most beneficial Acts of Charity we owe to it: To take a Youth, that is poor and destitute of all advantages of Education, and to bring him up in the knowledge and fear of God, and to put him into a way, wherein by his future diligence and industry he may arrive to an honest Livelihood in this World. E Let

Let us deposite this Tribute of our Affection for this Use, and what you leave with the *Worthy Stewards* of the *Eaſt* this Day, be an Earnest-peny of your Generous Inclinations in doing something further, as God ſhall bleſs you, for the advantage of our *School* in ſucceeding Years to come. Reſolve to do this before you go hence, *before the Lord your God, from the Ground of your Heart*, and make him ſome chearful and ſuitable acknowledgment of his diſtinguiſhing Providence towards you and yours. So ſhall the reſt of your Subſtance be bleſſed and increaſed, the Honour of our *School* promoted and advanced, ſo as that Generations to come will riſe up at the mentioning of your Names, and call you Bleſſed.

In a word. Great will your Reward be that you will have *in the Lord*, ſince you are aſſured from the ſacred Writ, *that God is not unrighteous to forget your Work and Labour of Love, which you have herein ſhewn towards his Name, in that you have Miniſtered unto them, and yet reſolve to Miniſter.*

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed all Honour, Glory, Power, Might, Majeſty and Dominion, from this time forth, and for evermore. *Amen.*

FINIS.

